

Scale issue on the recognition of desertification in Inner Mongolia, China

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There is a great concern for desertification in Inner Mongolia, China. It leads to many reports and papers concerning land degradation. However, there are some papers that report greening trend in the region. It seems there is a paradox.

We think there is a scale issue between satellite data of global and regional views. NOAA/AVHRR and LANDSAT/TM are used to monitor changes in land condition at the same time and place.

The analyses of longtime NOAA/AVHRR data confirms increasing trend of NDVI(Normalized Difference Vegetation Index). On the other hand, landcover change revealed by LANDSAT/TM shows that desertification appears patchy distribution around cropland or village.

Desertification is not a broad phenomenon but local one. It starts from a spot and expand or sometimes disappear. We have to have precise recognition on desertification to create policy for wise land management.